

Senate Joint Resolution No. 23

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 61

Senate Joint Resolution No. 23—Relative to the federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

[Filed with Secretary of State June 13, 2008.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 23, Aanestad. Federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000: extension.

This measure would urge the 110th Congress to reauthorize and fund the federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000.

WHEREAS, From 1908 to 2000, counties in the United States received 25 percent of the revenues generated on national forest lands in lieu of lost tax revenues that could have been generated had these lands remained in private hands; and

WHEREAS, In the 1990s, the volume and value of timber harvested on national forest lands was dramatically reduced, which led Congress to enact the federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, which provided a six-year guarantee payment option that was independent of the revenue generated on the national forest lands; and

WHEREAS, The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, as extended by the United States Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (Public Law 110-28), expired on September 30, 2007, and creates a lapse in funding to critical programs in schools and counties across the United States, including California, in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, Rural schools are dependent on federal revenue-sharing programs, including federal forest payments, for maintaining vital educational services and programs, and to ensure an equitable education for all students; and

WHEREAS, Many of California's county public works programs will be crippled without stable, predictable, long-term funding from the act, causing the local road network to suffer long-term degradation and putting communities at risk for public safety emergencies due to cuts in staffing and operational activities; and

WHEREAS, A number of efforts have been made and are continuing to be made in both the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate to fully reauthorize the act through 2011, and the Legislature strongly supports these efforts; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California respectfully urges the 110th Congress to reauthorize and fund the federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 to provide a long-term, stable source of funding for schools and counties to maintain vital programs prior to September 30, 2008, to avoid any interruption in county services and school operations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.